

FOREWORD

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Practically all areas of our private and professional lives were upended during the past year – including the museum world.

After an initial, almost complete standstill of the cultural sector beginning in mid-March 2020 and three months of emergency operations within a program of drastically reduced work, activity behind the closed museum doors could recommence during the second half of 2020; conservation and research continued, if under more difficult conditions. Increased remote work, limited personnel numbers in at times extremely compact spaces occasioned by the pandemic, and many uncertainties and imponderables of programming did little to facilitate progress on the contributions to the *Technical Studies* – which require continued coordination between the authors and editors as well as other museum departments, including publications and visual media. The current volume appears more than a year later than originally planned. Fundamental questions also emerged as to the role of museums and the cultural industry more broadly. Not least, through the loss of (international) tourism and the mandated closures of cultural institutions, including the federal museums, the communication of research content was significantly transferred to the digital realm, which brings advantages but also disadvantages.

Even before the outbreak of the Coronavirus pandemic, a number of major changes were planned for the *Technical Studies* from volume fourteen. All volumes will now appear in both German and English, ‘open access’ in digital form on the KHM website and in a limited number of printed copies. Through the redesign of the website currently being implemented – this too has been delayed by the pandemic – it will not only be the publications themselves (previously only obtainable in bookstores) that will be available for free download in the future. Much more, an attempt will be made to add via a suitable platform, and thus make accessible to a wider public, the ever expanding and increasingly multimedia information that does not ‘fit between the covers of a book’. Additional illustrations, high resolution photographs, images, audio and video material will thus considerably augment and enhance access to scholarly content, research results, and the current activities of the individual conservation laboratories and scholarly departments within the associated museums.

Likewise independent of the Coronavirus pandemic, a change has occurred in our editorial team: Matthias Manzini from the Imperial Carriage Museum succeeds our esteemed colleague Alfons Huber, who began his well-earned (and surely unretiring) retirement at the end of 2019. In Alfons Huber, the *Technical Studies* lose a co-founder and longtime comrade-in-arms who, even before the publication of the first volume in 2004, advocated that a great wish of many scholars in the associated museums be fulfilled: the combined presentation of conservation and restoration research and publications in serial form. It is not least thanks to his tireless efforts in finding and preparing interesting contributions that the *Technical Studies* have become a success story and are now established at the KHM as a scholarly periodical. At largely regular intervals, thirteen volumes with a total of eighty-four contributions have appeared thus far, offering in-depth insights from the perspective of conservators and curators into the study and preservation of artworks from the KHM-Museumsverband and also, occasionally, of external objects. We thank Alfons wholeheartedly for his valuable support and wish him the best for his future plans – which he will surely realize with the same enthusiasm that he brought to the *Technical Studies*. The collaboration on a personal level, in addition to the professional, also will be greatly missed.

At the same time, we are happy to welcome to the editorial team Matthias Manzini, who has been a conservator at the Imperial Carriage Museum since 2015 and is eminently qualified for the editorial supervision of

contributions to the *Technical Studies*, through both his professional expertise and from his interest in the scholarly presentation of conservation-restoration and technological concerns. The broad spectrum of professional areas represented at the KHM-Museumsverband is thus again to some extent mirrored in the editorial team.

We are very pleased to again be able to present a wide-ranging cross-section of excellent research in the essays selected for the fourteenth volume of the *Technical Studies*. This time the arc of subjects spans from Egyptian mummy cartonnages from the tenth to eighth centuries BCE; to a monumental altar painting by Garofalo, *The Resurrection of Christ*, from the first quarter of the sixteenth century, which was hidden for decades in storage due to its poor condition; to one of the most important objects in the collection of the Weltmuseum Wien, the three part lacquer screen from the 1770s from the era of the Chinese emperor Qianlong; to the 1813 fortepiano by Nannette Streicher from the holdings of the Collection of Historic Musical Instruments. The latter contribution is also the first opportunity to offer expanded information relating to the *Technical Studies*, including a video and audio recording of a piano piece by Franz Schubert – minuet no. 2, C, from *Twenty Minuets for the Pianoforte* – which will be available online.

We thank the General Director, Sabine Haag, for her continuous support of the publication series. Our particular thanks go to the Publications Department, General Secretary Franz Pichorner, Benjamin Mayr, and Annette Van der Vyver, who accompanied the transformation of the *Technical Studies* through word and deed, as well as the Visual Media Department for digital image processing and layout.

We wish much inspiration and enjoyment in the study of the printed or the digital editions and in the exploration of the expanded multimedia content; we hope, with these additional materials, to gain new and hopefully regular readers.